

Remarks

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-19, and 21-33 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 15, and 27 being the independent claims. Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections, and that they be withdrawn.

Interview

Applicants' representative expresses appreciation for the personal interview granted on September 18, 2007. It was agreed in the interview that the Rule 131 Declaration that was filed on January 22, 2007, provided sufficient evidence that the invention predates U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0157902 to Khorram (hereinafter "Khorram"). Therefore, it was agreed in the interview that Khorram is not prior art for the present application.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-12, 14-19, 21, 22, 25, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,954,625 to Crowley (hereinafter "Crowley") in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0157902 to Khorram (hereinafter "Khorram"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Office Action admits that Crowley does not teach all the features of the claimed invention, and relies on Khorram to provide the missing features. As agreed in the interview on September 18, 2007, Khorram is not a prior art reference for the present application, and thus is unable to support a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Therefore, Applicants request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be reconsidered and removed that claims 1-12, 14-19, 21, 22, 25, and 26 be passed to allowance.

Claims 13, 23, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cowley (U.S. 6,954,625) in view of Khorram and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,591,091 to Vorenkamp et al. (hereinafter "Vorenkamp"). Applicants traverse below.

As discussed above, Khorram is not a prior art reference for the present application. Vorenkamp does not supply the missing teachings, nor does the Office Action suggest this. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 13, 23, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be reconsidered and removed and that these claims be passed to allowance.

Claims 27-30, and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cowley in view of Khorram in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,678,012 to Belotsterkovsky (hereinafter "Belotsterkovsky"). Applicants traverse below.

As discussed above, Khorram is not a prior art reference for the present application. Belotsterkovsky does not supply the missing teachings, nor does the Office Action suggest this. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 13, 23, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be reconsidered and removed and that these claims be passed to allowance.

Claims 31 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cowley (U.S. 6,954,625) in view of Khorram in view of Belotsterkovsky and in view of Vorenkamp. Applicants traverse below.

As discussed above, Khorram is not a prior art reference for the present application. Vorenkamp and Belotsterkovsky do not supply the missing teachings, nor

does the Office Action suggest this. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 31 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be reconsidered and removed and that these claims be passed to allowance.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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